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STATISTICAL SUMMARY

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Prospective Acreage Up From Last Year

Acreages of the 52 principal crops to be planted or grown in 1952, allowing for numerous crops not yet surveyed, are estimated in March to total 359 million acres. This would be 1 percent more than the 354.7 million acres in crops in 1952 and slightly above the '42-51 average.

Spring Acreage Estimates Not Final

Total for 16 spring-planted crops is indicated at 271 million acres, based on farmers prospective plans in March. This compares with 266.7 million a year ago, for the 16 crops. But many farmers change their acreage plans after studying the March prospective plantings report, main purpose of which is to assist farmers in making plans for the year's acreage.

Prospective Acreages and Percentage Comparisons With 1952 ^{1/}

	1952 (Thousands)	1953 (Thousands)	Percent of 1952
Corn, all	82,658	81,764	98.9
Spring Wheat	21,518	21,600	100.4
Oats	42,975	43,777	101.9
Barley	9,385	9,357	99.7
Flaxseed	3,450	4,142	120.1
Rice	2,013	2,119	105.3
Sorghums	12,455	14,666	117.8
Potatoes	1,417	1,509	106.5
Sweetpotatoes	334	367	109.7
Tobacco ^{2/}	1,776	1,659	93.5
Beans, dry edible	1,319	1,332	101.0
Peas, dry field	228	234	102.6
Soybeans ^{3/}	15,643	15,862	101.4
Peanuts ^{3/}	1,969	1,958	99.4
Hay	74,664	74,859	100.3
Sugar beets	720	801	111.2

^{1/} 16 spring-planted crops. ^{2/} Acreage harvested.
^{3/} Grown alone, all purposes.

Larger Feed Grain Acreage-Less in Corn and Barley, More in Oats and Sorghum

A somewhat larger aggregate acreage of feed grains than in 1952 is indicated, but not necessarily an increase in tonnage. Corn acreage in prospect is smaller than last year by about 1 percent; barley also by a slight margin, but these acreage

PARITY PRICES FOR FARM PRODUCTS AND ACTUAL PRICES RECEIVED

COMMODITY AND UNIT	ACTUAL PRICE		PARITY PRICE
	Jan. 15 1953	Feb. 15 1953	Feb. 15 1953
Wheat, bu. dol.	2.10	2.05	2.41
Corn, bu. dol.	1.48	1.43	1.75
Peanuts, lb. ct.	10.9	11.0	13.1
Cotton, lb. ct. ^{1/}	29.79	30.19	33.85
Potatoes, bu. dol.	2.06	1.79	1.65
Hogs, 100 lb. dol.	17.80	19.30	20.40
Beef cattle, 100 lb. dol.	19.70	18.80	21.20
Veal calves, 100 lb. dol.	23.40	23.20	23.60
Lambs, 100 lb. dol.	20.30	20.40	22.90
Butterfat, lb. ct. ^{2/}	65.7	65.2	74.8
Milk, wholesale, 100 lb. .. dol. ^{2/}	4.57	4.54	4.70
Chickens, live, lb. ct. ^{2/}	26.5	26.6	30.8
Eggs, doz. ct. ^{2/}	47.7	48.3	47.0

^{1/} American upland cotton.

^{2/} Adjusted.

^{3/} Preliminary.

decreases are more than offset by larger acreages in sorghums and oats. No official forecasts of production are made this early; but if prospective acreages are realized, average yields by States would mean an aggregate of 115 million tons of feed grains. Last year's tonnage was nearly 121 million; tonnage 2 years ago, 113 million.

Hay Acreage Up a Little

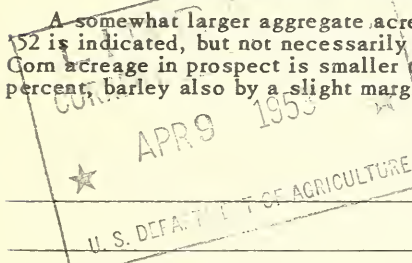
Hay acreage, indicated at 74.9 million acres, is slightly larger than last year. With an average carryover in prospect, this would provide liberal hay supplies for the expanding livestock numbers.

Spring Activities, Moisture and Water Supplies

Farming activities this spring are mostly normal to advanced. Soil moisture ranges from barely adequate to satisfactory in most areas. In the Southern Great Plains, surface

Prices Received and Prices Paid by Farmers Index Numbers, 1910-14 = 100

	Jan. 1952	Feb. 1952	Dec. 1952	Jan. 1953	Feb. 1953
Prices received by farmers	300	289	269	267	263
Crops	277	259	257	251	247
Food grains	251	249	247	245	240
Feed grains and hay	234	230	218	214	206
Tobacco	431	436	428	419	424
Cotton	325	313	268	252	255
Fruit	171	168	206	208	209
Truck crops	337	217	256	237	237
Oil-bearing crops	303	296	300	291	287
Livestock and products	320	317	280	281	277
Meat animals	376	377	291	303	305
Dairy products	316	317	309	296	286
Poultry and eggs	200	181	221	218	206
Prices paid by farmers:					
All commodities	275	276	267	267	264
Commodities used in living	271	271	269	268	266
Commodities used in production	278	281	264	265	261
All commodities, interest, taxes, and wage-rates	287	288	280	282	280
Parity ratio (prices rec'd to prices paid by farmers)	105	100	96	95	94



moisture is only temporarily adequate and subsoil reserves are lacking. Irrigation water supplies will be near normal in the North, tapering to below normal in Southern Rocky Mountain areas. Seed supplies reported generally adequate.

Winter Wheat Prospects Unsettled

There was still uncertainty this spring as to prospects for winter wheat. Many farmers in the Great Plains were faced with a dilemma in reporting their crop-acreage plans. Their winter wheat still occupied their fields; but because of its precarious condition, they had to be ready with a crop to replant the land if the crop were lost.

All-Wheat Below Last Year's Acreage

Adding the seeded acres of winter wheat to the prospective acreage of spring wheat would bring the total all-wheat indicated to about 77 million acres, compared with nearly 77.5 million last year.

Wheat Production Possibly 921 Million Bushels

If acreages materialize and yields come up to average, by States, the all spring wheat crop would total about 310 million bushels. This plus a winter wheat crop of the size indicated last December would bring the total for all-wheat to 921 million bushels. Last year's production, 1,291 million, third largest of record.

3 Billion Bushels of Corn Indicated

On the basis of prospective plantings and average yields by States, corn production this year would be about 3 billion bushels. Production last year, 3.3 billion; 2 years ago, 2.9 billion; 1942-51 average 3 billion. If intentions are carried out, this year's corn acreage would be 1 percent below the 1952 plantings and the smallest acreage since 1929.

Sorghum Crop May Be Near Average

The size of the sorghum acreage is not definitely settled because the extent of wheat abandonment is not yet known. Much will depend also on weather the next 2 months. Farmers' intentions in early March indicate an acreage of about 14.7 million acres—just about average, although an increase of 18 percent from last year. Too early for a production forecast... but if the trend toward a larger proportion of grain varieties is taken into account and yields are average, by States, a crop of 160 million bushels would result. Crop last year was 83 million; 10-year average, 137 million.

Oats Might Exceed Last Year's Crop

About 1,340 million bushels of oats might be expected from this year's prospective acreage, if average yields by States are attained. This would be slightly above both last year and the 10-year average.

Prospects for Barley

Barley production on prospective acreage, at average yields by States would total about 224 million bushels. This would compare with 227 million last year and 295 million average.

Smaller Food Grain Acreage

Acreage of food grains is expected to be slightly smaller than in '52; winter wheat, less by about a half-million acres... Intended acreage of spring wheat barely exceeds that of a year ago. Rice acreage is indicated larger than in '52 by 106,000 acres. Rye acreage is up about 7 percent, but little increase in harvested acreage is likely.

Rice Indicated Close to Last Year's Record

Rice crop would total 47 million bags (100 lb.) based on prospective acreage and average yields. This would compare with 48.7 million bags produced in '52.

Larger Acreage of Oilseeds

A larger total acreage of oilseeds is in prospect. Includes a sharp increase in flax, nearly 700,000 acres more than in '52; a 200,000-acre increase in soybeans; and a peanut acreage almost as large as last year.

Soybean Crop Prospects

If 1947-51 average yields of soybeans are attained, by States, some 285 million bushels would be produced on the prospective acreage. This estimate counts the same proportion of acreage harvested for beans as in 1950, '51 and '52. Such production would be below 1952 and below 1950 but otherwise a record crop.

Prospects for Potatoes

Potato acreage is indicated 6 percent larger than in '52, but 35 percent below the 1942-51 average. Increases are in prospect in all parts of the country. Biggest expansion is indicated in the early States and the late States of the West. Intended plantings would produce a crop of 385 million bushels, if yields by States equal the 1950-52 average. Production last year, 347.5 million. Sweetpotato acreage will be increased but will still be much below the 10-year average.

Dry Beans and Peas

At 1947-51 average yields, this year's prospective acreage of dry field peas would produce about 2.6 million bags (100-lb.), about same as last year's small crop. Dry beans would total 14.6 million bags on prospective acreage, if per-acre yields are the same as the 1947-51 average. Production last year, 16.8 million; average 18 million.

Fewer Chicks and Poults Hatched

Chicks hatched in February were fewer by 9 percent than a year earlier. Total was 172.9 million compared with 190.4 million year ago and 132.4 million average. Chicks for broilers accounted for most of the decrease. Hatcheries also reported 34 percent less poults hatched in February than a year earlier.

Milk Production New High

The 8.5 billion pounds of milk produced in February was a new high for the month...an increase of 5 percent from the 8.2 billion pounds produced in February a year ago. February output in relation to population was higher than in 4 of the last 5 years.

6 Percent Fewer Eggs Laid Last Month

The 5.3 billion eggs laid in February compare with 5.7 billion a year earlier and 4.9 billion 10-year average. Total is down 6 percent from year earlier but up 9 percent from the 10-year average. Number of layers down 3 percent from year ago.

Business Continues Active

Business is expected to be generally good for the next few months. Investment and construction prospects point to continued high-level economic activity. Defense spending also will expand further.

Farm Employment Down 1 Percent From Year Ago —Total Civilian, Up 1.1 Million

7.6 million persons were at work on farms in late February, down from a year ago by about 1 percent. Farm operators and members of their families numbered 6.4 million; hired workers, 1.2 million. Decrease from year ago was in family workers; hired workers, no change.

Civilian employment in February totaled 60.9 million compared with 59.8 million a year ago. Unemployed in February totaled 1.8 million compared with 2.1 million year earlier.

CURRENT INDEXES FOR AGRICULTURE

INDEX NUMBERS	BASE PERIOD	Feb. 1953
Prices received by farmers.....	1910-14=100	263
Prices paid by farmers, interest, taxes and wage rates.....	1910-14=100	280
Parity ratio	1910-14=100	94
Farm wage rates	1910-14=100	1/ 514
Wholesale prices of food.....	1947-49=100	1/ 105
Retail prices of food	1947-49=100	1/ 113
Weekly factory earnings.....	1947-49=100	1/ 146

PRODUCTION COMPARISONS	Jan.-Feb. 1952	Jan.-Feb. 1953
Milk, (bil. lb.)	16.3	17.2
Eggs, (bil.)	11.0	10.8
Beef, (dr. wt., mil. lb.).....	2/ 614	2/ 721
Lamb & mutton (Dr. wt., mil. lb.)..	2/ 51	2/ 61
Pork & lard (mil. lb.).....	2/ 1,270	2/ 1,163
All meats (dr. wt., mil. lb.).....	2/ 1,977	2/ 1,999

1/ January figure.

2/ January total under Federal inspection.